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ABSTRACT

The theory that certain motivation/talent/value drives formed through work experience function to guide and constrain entire careers is examined. This "career anchor" theory focuses upon what the individual feels are major areas of personal strength. This occupational self concept is based on how the individual perceives personal talents and abilities, motives and needs, and attitudes and values. A questionnaire was submitted to secondary inservice teachers to test the validity of the "career anchor" theory. Results indicated that four main categories of teachers may exist: those who identify managerial competence, creativity, and identity as career values; those who value service and variety; those who had security and technical competence as central themes in their career decisions; and those who focused on autonomy. These results are analyzed as they pertain to organizational turnover in the schools, the phenomenon of teacher burnout, and the training and development functions within educational organizations. (JD)

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Career Planning for the Educator: Validating Current Career Development Theories

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Career Planning for the Educator: Validating Current Career Development Theories

In the past decade there has been an influx of information appearing in books, guides, and journals concerning careers and career development. As more and more educators contemplate their careers and make subsequent career decisions, an ever increasing need has arisen for new and logical models of career development to assist the educator. One model which has drawn considerable attention is the "career anchor" model created by Dr. Edgar Schein of M.I.T.

Schein (1978) suggests that certain motivational/talent/value drives formed through work experience, function to guide and constrain entire careers. These basic combinations of needs, drives, and self image, act, in effect, as "career anchors" that not only influence career choices, but also effect decisions to move from one job to another, shape what the individual is looking for in life, and color his views of the future. Schein suggested that although we continue throughout life to gain valuable data about ourselves in regard to our behavior, the first three to five years of work experience are particularly important for our career development and provide the groundwork for future career decisions.

The career anchor model appears to have the potential to serve as a useful information base for either individuals contemplating a career change or for organizations seeking to aid their employees in career planning.

The Origin of the Career Anchor Notion

Schein's "career anchor" model is defined in broader terms than job values or needs. It emphasizes evolution, development, and discovery through actual work experiences. More specifically, the concept of a career anchor tries to focus on not only what the person wants or thinks is important, but also on what the individual feels he "is good at."

The early career can be viewed as a time for mutual discovery between the new employee and the organization; how he fits into the organization; how he contributes to the organization; how he meets his needs through the organization; and how he interacts and receives feedback from the organization. As the new employee gathers more information about himself, an occupational self-concept develops. This occupational self-concept has three components according to Schein (p. 125):

1. Self perceived talents and abilities (based on actual successes in a variety of work settings).

2. Self perceived motives and needs (based on opportunities for self tests and self diagnosis in real situations and on feedback from others).

3. Self perceived attitudes and values (based on actual encounter between self and the norms and values of the employing organization and work settings).

The career anchor concept emphasizes that until one has encountered a number of real life situations, motives and values will interact with each other to fit the career options available. An individual may join an organization only to find that the security he thought "came with the

job" is in fact non-existent. Career anchors are intended to identify a growing area of stability within the person. It may well be that career anchors are the source of stability that permits growth and change in other areas. It should be recognized that the concept is designed to explain that part of your life which grows more stable as we develop more self-insight based on more life experiences.

The concept of career anchors emerged directly from a longitudinal study of a representative group of 44 MIT Management School male graduates who completed their graduate work in the early 1960's. The respondents in the study all returned to MIT ten to twelve years later for indepth individual interviews for the purpose of gathering comprehensive career histories.

Specifically, the 1974 interviews focused on the actual job history of each person and the reason for the choices or decisions which the graduate had made. When Schein examined the stated reasons for the decisions, there emerged in almost all cases a clear pattern of responses. The actual job histories of the 44 alumni differed, but the consistency in the reasons given for career decisions was great. The greater the job experiences the more clearcut, more articulate the alumni were in describing their career history.

Five career anchors emerged from the interviews:

Anchor 1: Security. Individuals with security as their anchor have tied their careers to a particular organization. The implications are that individuals who are "security" oriented will accept, to a

greater degree than the other career anchor types, an organizational definition of their careers. The "security" anchored individuals would look for an organization which provided long run stability, good benefits, and basic job security. The organization man as defined by Whyte (1956) would typify people who are "security" oriented, because in order to remain in the organization, individuals must socialize themselves to its values and norms.

Anchor 2: Technical/functional competence. Technical/functional people are motivated by the challenge of the actual work they do, e.g., marketing, curriculum design, public realtions, or some specific educational expertise. Their anchor is the technical field, functional area, or content of their work, not the managerial process itself. The self-image of individuals in the technical/functional competence group is tied up with their feelings of competence in the particular area they are in.

Anchor 3: Managerial competence. The fundamental basis for the "managerial competence" anchor is to be competent in the complex activities that comprise the idea of "management." "Managerial competence" oriented individuals perceive that their competencies lie in the ability to analyze problems, remain emotionally stable, and interpersonally competent. Their career experiences would enable them to develop the self-image that they had the skills and values necessary to rise to general management levels, i.e. district superintendent.

Anchor 4: Creativity. "Creative" anchored individuals have a need to create something on their own. "Creating" is the fundamental need operating for example, in the entrepreneur. "Creative" oriented individuals keep getting into new ventures and trying their hand at new kinds of projects. They are also very central and visible while working on projects.

Anchor 5: Autonomy. The "autonomy" anchor encompasses those who have found organizational life to be restrictive, irrational, and/or intrusive into their lives. They are primarily concerned about their own sense of freedom and autonomy. "Autonomy" oriented individuals are seeking work situations in which they will be maximally free of constraint to pursue their professional or technical/functional competence.

Schein has identified five independent career anchors which guide and constrain individuals lives. He has suggested that although other career anchors may exist, he has not discovered them in his research so far. Schein and his colleagues at MIT have considered other plausible career drives which may influence individuals' career development. Three possible career drives are: (1) identity--people who seek status and the prestige of working for a large organization are "identity" oriented, (2) service--individuals who are "service" oriented are concerned with seeing people change because of their efforts, (3) variety--individuals who desire an endless number of different types of challenges are "variety" oriented.

Research Methods

This study was designed to determine whether Schein's career values could be measured accurately using an instrument. It was also undertaken to see whether the career anchor notion was applicable to educators as well as those with training in business.

Sample

The sample for this study was 188 inservice teachers who were teaching at the secondary and middle school level. The sample comprised both male and female educators from the state of Utah. The age range varied from 24 to 50 years of age.

Questionnaire

Development

The questionnaire was developed by the investigator with the assistance of Schein. The first section of the questionnaire was designed to collect demographic information. The second section of the questionnaire was designed to collect data on the five career anchors (security, technical/functional competence, managerial competence, creativity, autonomy) and the three career drives (identity, service, and variety).

Four-point Likert-type scale items were used in the second section. Six items were created to collect data on each of the five career anchor variables and three career drive variables. An example item for the anchor "security" was:

> An organization which will provide security through guaranteed work, benefits, a good retirement program, etc. is 1 2 3 4

Three of the six items for each variable were written to assess the degree to which the conditions described in the statement were important to the respondents. The response 1 indicated of ... importance and 4 indicated centrally important.

The other three items for each variable were written to assess the degree to which the conditions described in the statement were true for the respondents. In this case, response 1 signified not true and 4 signified completely true.

The items were assembled in two separate 24-item scales according to the response requirements. The order of the items in both scales were determined on a random basis. Finally, the two 24-item scales were combined to create one 48-item career scale.

Data Analysis

A factor analysis procedure was employed to determine whether the data for the eight career variables would factor into the five career anchor variables defined by Schein. Since correlations between variables were of concern, R-factoring was selected. The principal component solution, which assumes that the factors or variables are defined and not inferred, was used. Orthogonal as opposed to oblique factoring was also employed. Finally, a Kaiser varimax rotation procedure was used to analyze the data.

Two factor analyses were run. The first was run as an internal validity check to determine whether the six items on the questionnaire measuring each career variable would factor out together from the 48 x 48

correlation matrix. The second factor analysis was run to test the hypothesis of this study, i.e., that the data on the eight career variables collected on the questionnaire would factor into the five career anchor variables as defined by Schein. This analysis entailed defining eight composite variables based on the combination of the scores from the six items for each of the eight career variables. This factor analysis was based on an 8 x 8 correlation matrix computed for the eight career variables.

Results

Using a factor analytic approach to ascertain the internal validity, the results indicate that the individual items designed to measure each of the eight career variables, for the most part, clustered together. One major exception was observed. For the "security" variable, the analysis suggest that the items are measuring two different security variables: (1) in Factor Seven the high coefficients corresponded to two items emphasizing the part of security which concerns itself with remaining in a certain geographical location as opposed to moving employment location, and (2) Factor Eight had high coefficients which correspond to items emphasizing stability, benefits, and good retirement.

The second factor analytic approach was used to determine which of the eight career drive variables clustered together. The results of

Table 1. Breakdown of the eight career variables into four major factors.

Career variables	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Service	0.09458	0.84796*	0.14365	-0.16738
Managerial competence	0.75922*	0.38195	0.02942	-0.05944
Autonomy	0.00225	0.07591	0.06276	0.88389*
Variety	0.15246	0.79664*	-0.09484	0.34389
Security	0.18059	0.09079	0.74321*	-0.16180
Creativity	0.70807*	-0.13932	-0.13415	0.45930
Technical competence	-0.10142	-0.04856	0.81271*	0.25776
Identity	0.67843	0.13775	0.46696	-0.18371

*Coefficients which clearly cluster together.

Summary Discussion, Implications

The purpose of this study was to evaluate whether or not the "career anchor" model had validity in the educational sector. More specifically, the study sought to answer the question: Can the five career anchors be identified using educators as the sample? Furthermore, the study attempted to study the implications of the career anchor model for the professional educator.

A questionnaire was developed by the investigators to collect data on the five career anchor variables and three other career drive variables. Subsequent interviews took place involving secondary education teachers and university personnel.

The results indicate that four main factors or categories of teachers may exist. The first grouping had those teachers who value managerial competence, creativity and identity as career values. These individuals may be those who seek managerial positions in school administrations. These educators are also interested in working in large organizations and having the organizations define for them what their role is.

The second category focused on those educators who value service and variety. Many teachers, social workers, and counselors fall into this category. These individuals are motivated by seeing others change because of their efforts. Furthermore, this same group liked teaching because it gave them employment where they could have many different types of tasks.

The third group had security and technical competence as central themes in their career decision making patterns. They valued the opportunity to live in a particular geographical location and have long term

benefits. They also enjoyed having a reputation for some expertise in some area of the educational profession.

The final group focused on autonomy as their central anchor. These educators are those who enjoy the freedom of having their own classroom, their own sense of freedom. This group would also encompass those who find it difficult to follow regulations without questioning the rules in depth.

It is critical for organizations to appreciate the differentness in its employees rather than punish those who seem different from what the school norms are. Perhaps those teachers who are leaving the field of education are doing so because their is a bad match between their career orientation and job definition. Teachers need to have more assistance in career planning so that a compatible match between individual and organizations may exist.

The results imply that organizational turnover in the educational sector is due to more than financial pressures. Rather, psychological factors within the individual play a much larger role. These seemingly unpredictable career decisions have a major effect on both the individual and the organization.

More conceptual models are needed to understand why individuals within organizations make the career decisions they do. Few teachers have the conceptual framework to assist them in reflecting upon their career path and making sense of their past experiences in relation to their future career decisions.

The career anchor model which focuses on career orientations of people may be one model which gives more insights to both the individual and organization in the area of education.

Both the professional educator and educational organization need greater insights into why individuals make the career decisions they do. The teacher who experiences organizational pressures which run contrary to his/her career anchor may find increased dissatisfaction not only at work but with the total environment.

One of the central issues is whether educational organizations have enough flexibility to meet the needs of individuals who have many different and varying career anchors. The typology of career anchors plays a significant role as organizations begin to focus on human resource planning and development. Neither individual satisfaction nor organizational effectiveness can be achieved if a strategy does not exist to meet those needs. An organization which focuses on human resource planning must not only be concerned about organization effectiveness, but individual effectiveness (Schein, 1978).

In relation to career planning Schein suggests the following:

> The dynamics of the matching process between individual and organization cannot be managed without more knowledge about: (a) individual life cycles and how self, career, and family development interact throughout those cycles; (b) the nature of organizational career dynamics, career paths, career stages, and other aspects of how organizations recruit, utilize, and manage their human resources; (c) the reciprocal interaction of individual and organization, the process of organizational socialization, and the process of individual innovation (p. 244).

One phase of individual innovation is understanding models of career development. The dynamics of finding one's career orientation and finding a sufficient range of job challenges to determine one's orientation is crucial. Without insight into one's own career orientation the problems of mid and late career are much more likely to be severe. If human resource planning is to be viewed as a total system approach, then both the organization and individual must be involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the ongoing system.

As researchers speculate why teacher burn-out transpires, the lack of career planning may be one area which is guilty. Teachers are given little guidance vis a vis why they have made the career decisions they have. More school districts will need to assist teachers in making sense out of their past and how that past influences future decisions.

Those involved with counseling teachers may also want to know more about mid life and career dimensions. Training and development functions within educational organizations need relevant models to guide and encourage their employees to make the time of career decision-making a productive time for both the organization and the individual. Since the organization is a complex system, one must consider how each subsystem can be managed towards optimum effectiveness. Greater understanding of the human element is only one facet of the organization system, yet a most crucial one (DeLong, 1977). Schein's career anchor model may add some structure in understanding the human component in educational systems.

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